

Sri:mathe: Ra:ma:nuja:ya Namaha

EDITOR'S DESK



May 3, 2004 marks the occasion of Sri Lakshminarasimha Ja:yanthi, the day that Lord Sri:man Na:ra:yana took the form of the magnificent Man-Lion and emerged from a pillar. Many of us are familiar with the popular story of how the Lord came to this world, but most of us may not be fully aware of why He took on such a Unique Form. Some say that He came in this way to protect His young devotee, Prahla:da from the wickedness of his demon-king father, Hiranyakasipu. But, the Lord had protected Prahla:da so many times in the past without the His having on a specific form, so this really does not explain His Incarnation fully.

Others emphasize that the Lord took on this form for the purposes of maintaining a boon given to Hiranyakasipu by Brahma that he could not be killed by what the demon-king thought was any and all conditions. While this is true to a large extent, the Lord could have easily vanquished this King from His Eternal Abode with just a glance, or could have taken on some other Avatha:ra. So, this too does not fully explain things. So, then what was the reason for His taking on this magnificent form? Our a:cha:ryas teach us that it was to show to the world that as knower of Ve:das, His Devotees would never tell a lie.

Prahla:da had been placed in a Ve:dic gurukulam by his father such that he could become a great king. But, Prahla:da's respect for his gurus and sincere interest in learning the sa:sthras made him soon realize that God is present in all things, in all beings, and that the whole Universe is what it is solely because of His Grace. So, he constantly reveled at the beauty of this world and the Divinity that was there in the heart of each and everything. He also relied solely on the Lord's Love and Compassion, for his very life, and because He Is There Everywhere, His Mercy protected the young devotee from whatever great harm the egotistical Hiranyakasipu was to throw upon him.

The young devotee also knew that such great knowledge should be shared with all those who were interested, at the time that they asked. So, he shared his knowledge with fellow students who were truly interested in learning, as well as at the moment when his father called him into his court. When his father scoffingly asked about God, Prahla:da merely spoke the truths that he



had learned as a true student of Ve:da about God and His presence everywhere and in everything.

But, it was Hiranyakasipu's disbelief, inspite of Prahla:da telling him what the Ve:das teach, that caught Lord's attention. God is ever-ready to protect those who have learned good things and are willing to share these with others for the benefit of this world. So, when Hiranyakasipu angrily hit the pillar at Prahla:da's telling him that He was there too, the Lord emerged, caught the egotistical king, and killed him in the way that was in accordance with Brahma's boon.

One of our great A:lwa:rs, Sri: Namma:lwar describes how Lord emerged from the pillar. There was not even a nano-second of time from the moment that Hiranyakasipu's sword struck the pillar and the moment that the Lord emerged. The Lord came from the exact spot where the pillar was struck, without even a subatomic level of distance, to remove any doubt that what Prahla:da said was true. And to add to this, the Lord proved even Brahma's own words that had been given as a boon by taking on a form that was neither man nor beast; at dusk when it was neither day nor night; killing the wicked demon king using His nails, which are neither living nor non-living, on the stoop of the palace, which is neither outside or inside; placing him on His Strong Lap, so that the demon was neither on the ground nor in the air.

All the gods and demons were struck with wonder and fear at what they saw ... a ferocious form of the Lord ! But to Bhaktha Prahla:da, the Lord could only be seen in the same Charming Way, and with the Same Loving Smile, that the young devotee saw Him in each and every being.

May Lord Lakshminarasimha protect and inspire us in our own good intentions and make us true students to our Chinna Jeeyar Swamiji, such that together we can uphold his message of "Serve all Living Beings as Service to God".

- Mohan Sagar

